

Message Text

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SUBJECT: FIFTH COMMITTEE-CUBAN RESOLUTION ON INFLATION AND
INSTABILITY

REF: A) STATE 274380 (USUN 20549); B) USUN 6069

1. SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE EXAMINES THE OUTCOME OF THIS YEAR'S CUBAN RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD HAVE SOAKED THE US FOR THE BULK OF INFLATION AND CURRENCY FLUCTUATION COSTS IN THE UN BUDGET. THE DECISIVE DEFEAT OF THE CUBAN MOVE DEMONSTRATED AGAIN THAT THE SOVIET BLOC CANNOT ATTRACT AUTOMATIC THIRD WORLD SUPPORT FOR ANY IRRESPONSIBLE PROPOSAL IT PUTS FORWARD. END SUMMARY

2. CUBA, BACKED AND PROBABLY INSPIRED BY SOVIET UNION, MADE ANOTHER EFFORT THIS YEAR IN FIFTH COMMITTEE TO FORCE THE US TO PAY MOST OF BILL FOR INFLATION AND DEVALUATION IN UN BUDGET. THE MOVE FAILED BY A MARGIN VERY MUCH THE SAME AS LAST YEAR, DESPITE FACT THAT THIS TIME CUBA PAID LIP SERVICE TO ARTICLE 17 OF CHARTER AND PROPOSED THAT 20 PERCENT OF INFLATION/DEVALUATION COSTS SHOULD BE COVERED BY MEMBERSHIP GENERALLY (80 PERCENT BY QTE DEVELOPED HOST COUNTRIES UNQTE).

3. THE CUBAN QTE CONCESSIONS UNQTE FORMULA ONLY ACCENTUATED THE
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OUTRAGEOUSNESS OF PROPOSAL IN EYES OF RESPONSIBLE UN MEMBERS, AND

IT IS EASY TO GIVE WAY TO DISMAY THAT ANYONE BESIDES SOVIET BLOC WOULD SUPPORT IT OR EVEN ABSTAIN. HOWEVER, SIGNIFICANT FACT IS THAT CUBA AND THE BLOC WERE ONLY ABLE TO ROUND UP TEN THIRD WORLD VOTES FOR RESOLUTION. FURTHERMORE, 13 THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES CAST THEIR LOT WITH SOLID (EXCEPT FOR GREECE) WESTERN GROUP AND VOTE AGAINST IT. VOTE WAS 20 IN FAVOR, 35 AGAINST, 33 ABSTENTIONS. (ROLL CALL VOTE REQUESTED BY US).

4. TO BE SURE, THERE WAS NO VISIBLE EVIDENCE THAT CUBANS AND THEIR FRIENDS ENGAGED IN INTENSIVE LOBBYING. ONE BLOC MEMBER, HUNGARY, WAS NOT EVEN PRESENT, AND THERE WERE A NUMBER OF RADICAL ABSENTEES SUCH AS IRAQ AND MALI WHOSE VOTES COULD HAVE AT LEAST NARROWED MARGIN NOTICEABLY. MANY COMMITTEE MEMBERS BELIEVED CUBA HAD DECIDED NOT TO PUT A DFRAT IN THIS YEAR AND WERE SURPRISED WHEN IT WAS CIRCULATED. VOTE WAS TAKEN AT AN EVENING MEETING NUMBER 19, ONE DAY AFTER DRAFT WAS INTRODUCED AND IT IS AN OPEN QUESTION IN WHOSE FAVOR ADDITIONAL TIME WOULD HAVE WORKED. THE ALGERIAN AND COLOMBIAN DELEGATES, BOTH OF WHOM HAD SAID PRIVATELY THEY OPPOSED RESOLUTION, RAISED QUESTION OF A DEFERRAL WITH COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BUT IN END ACQUIESCED IN VOTE BEING TAKEN, THEN SURPRISINGLY FAILED TO VOTE NO, PURPORTING TO BE DISPLEASED BY TONE OF DEBATE. ALGERIA LINED UP WITH CUBA IN YES COLUMN, NOT AN UNFAMILIAR POSITION, BUT IT SHOULD BE RECALLED THAT ALGERIA'S FIFTH COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE, FATHIH BOUAYAD-AGHA, OFTEN TAKES A RATHER INDEPENDENT APPROACH TO FINANCIAL QUESTIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE VIES WITH THE LARGE CONTRIBUTORS AS A BUDGET-PRUNNER IN SOME AREAS. HE APPREARED TO BE IN HIS CUPS NIGHT OF VOTE, WHICH COULD ACCOUNT FOR HIS VOLATILITY. HIS MORE SOBER YUGOSLAV COLLEAGUE ABSTAINED. DECISION OF COLOMBIAN REPRESENTATIVE, MRS. TERESA DE ZEA, TO ABSTAIN (ON GROUND THAT A QTE BROTHERCOUNTRY UNQTE HAD BEEN MALIGNED IN DEBATE) WAS PART OF A LACKLUSTER LATIN PERFORMANCE GENERALLY. ONLY HALF THE LATIN CONTINGENT BOTHERED TO ATTEND. OF THOSE PRESENT, ONLY THREE (BRAZIL, URUGUAY, AND CHILE) REJECTED CUBAN RESOLUTION, TWO (CUBA AND PERU) WERE IN FAVOR, AND SEVEN OTHERS (ARGENTINA, COLOMBIA, GUYANA, JAMAICA, MEXICO, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, AND VENEZUELA) ABSTAINED.

5. AFRICAN PERFORMANCE WAS NO WORSE AND ASIANS WERE MUCH BETTER. SEVERAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES NOT ONLY VOTED AGAINST RESOLUTION (GHANA, IVORY COAST, KENYA, NIGERIA, AND RWANDA) BUT WERE WILLING
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TO BE HEARD ON SUBJECT. IVORY COAST AND KENYAN STATEMENTS WERE BRIEF BUT ELOQUENT. GHANA AND KENYA, IT WILL BE RECALLED WERE AFRICAN MEMBERS OF 1974 WORKING GROUP ON CURRENCY INSTABILITY. ZAIRE, WHICH HAD SAID DAY BEFORE IT WAS NOT FAIR TO PLACE BLAME FOR INFLATION ON A FEW COUNTRIES, ABSTAINED IN THE EVENT. CUBAN BACKERS IN BLACK AFRICA WERE SOME OF COUNTRIES ONE MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED -- CONGO, DAHOMEY, GUINEA, LESOTHO AND MADAGASCAR. IN ASIA THERE WAS SOME WOBBLINESS BUT IN END THERE WAS A GOOD ASEAN

SHOWING (SINGAPORE, THAILAND, AND INDONESIA) AGAINST CUBAN DRAFT ALTHOUGH MALAYSIA ABSTAINED AND PHILIPPINES WAS ABSENT. NO ASIANS SUPPRTED CUBA; EVEN CHINA ABSTAINED. ARAB GROUP WAS MIXED. NONE WENT SO FAR AS TO SIDE WITH WEST, BUT SEVERAL ABSTAINED (BAHRAIN, EGYPT, KUWAIT, SAUDI ARABIA, TUNISIA, AND UAE) AND ONLY ALGERIA, DEMOCRATIC YEMEN, LIBYA AND SYRIA WENT WITH CUBA.

6. WEST DEMONSTRATED EVEN GREATER SOLIDARITY THAN ON ZIONIST-RACIST RESOLUTION. TURNING OUT IN FORCE, ITS VOTE WAS A UNANIMOUS NO FROM IRELAND TO TURKEY, FROM FINLAND TO PORTUGAL, WITH ONE EXCEPTION -- GREECE. STOFOROPOULOS, GREEK DELEGATE, TOLD US HE COULD NOT RISK ALIENATING SOVIET UNION, AND HE EVIDENTLY HAD IN MIND UPCOMING CYPRUS VOTE IN PLENARY. SOME DIFFERENCES IN WESTERN TACTICS WERE REVEALED IN DEBATE. US, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, AND NEW ZEALAND HAD ALL LOBBIED AGAINST RESOLUTION WITH THIRD WORLD DELEGATIONS IN THE LIMITED TIME WE HAD. US LED OFF DEBATE WITH A STRONG ATTACK ON BOGUS ECONOMIC THEORY UNDERLYING RESOLUTION AND A FRANK WARNING OF DAMAGE ITS PASSAGE WOULD DO TO ALREADY ERODED SUPPORT IN US FOR UN. BRITISH CHOSE TO IGNORE CUBA AND TEASE AND GOAD RUSSIANS, A GAME THEIR FIFTH COMMITTEE DELEGATE ENJOYS PLAYING AFTER FIRST APOLOGIZING FOR CALLING CUBAN RESOLUTION RIDICULOUS, THEN PROCEEDED TO ATTACK IT AND CUBAN MOTIVATIONS MERCILESSLY. MOST OTHER WESTERN DELEGATIONS WHICH TOOK THE FLOOR CONFINED THEMSELVES TO SOBER APPEALS TO CONSCIENCE. FOR A TIME THERE WAS SOME CONCERN IN WESTERN CAMP THAT US STERNNESS (SOME LDC'S GRUMBLED ABOUT QTE VEILED THREATS UNQTE), BRITISH FLIPPANCY, AND NEW ZEALAND ECCENTRICITY HAD TURNED MANY DELEGATIONS OFF, BUT IN RETROSPECT IT DOES NOT APPEAR LIKELY THAT OUTCOME COULD HAVE BEEN IMPROVED IF WESTERN DELEGATIONS HAD HANDLED MATTER DIFFERENTLY.

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7. COMMENT: IT IS REASONABLE TO SUPPOSE CUBAN INITIATIVE WILL REAPPEAR IN SOME FORM NEXT YEAR; SOVIET DEPUTY PERMREP, SAFRONCHUK, WAS HEARD TO SAY AFTER VOTE THAT HIS SIDE HAD MADE SOME SLIGHT PROGRESS THIS YEAR AND MAYBE STILL MORE COULD BE MADE BY NEXT YEAR. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS ELSEWHERE IN UN AND OUTSIDE UN WILL LARGELY DETERMINE WHETHER SAFRONCHUK PROVES RIGHT. ON OTHER HAND, SOVIETS MAY EVENTUALLY TIRE OF THIS GAMBIT. THEY MAY WELL HAVE HOPED AMONG OTHER THINGS TO PROVOKE US INTO EXPLICITLY THREATENING TO WITHHOLD CONTRIBUTIONS, WHICH WOULD HELP DEFLECT ATTENTION FROM THEIR OWN SORRY RECORD IN WITHHOLDINGS. HAVING SO FAR FAILED TO ACHIEVE THIS AIM, THEY MAY IN DUE COURSE DROP QTE LET HOST COUNTRY PAY UNQTE DEMAND AS THEY HAVE OTHERS. A FIRMER DOLLAR AND AN EASING OF WORLD INFLATION WOULD ALSO HELP US GET RID OF THE NUISANCE. MOYNIHAN

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